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Southern District of West Virginia**

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**DETROIT MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO FEDERAL OXYCODONE CHARGE**

CHARLESTON, W.Va. – Britt Ellison Nichols, 53, of Detroit, pleaded guilty today in federal court before United States District Judge Thomas E. Johnston to distribution of oxycodone. Nichols admitted that on April 14, 2010, he traveled from Detroit to Charleston, West Virginia for the purpose of distributing oxycodone tablets to a confidential informant working for the Drug Enforcement Administration Task Force. The defendant further admitted that at the time, he had approximately 950 to 970 80-milligram oxycodone tablets and approximately 30 40-milligram oxycodone tablets in his possession. The same day, Nichols arrived at the Holiday Inn Express located in Charleston and gave the informant a quantity of oxycodone tablets. Following the drug transaction, the defendant was arrested by law enforcement officers and the oxycodone tablets were retrieved. Nichols waived his Miranda rights and agreed to be interviewed. The defendant admitted that four to seven months prior to April 14, 2010, he made at least four trips to Charleston. The defendant further admitted that during that time, he delivered at least 250 80-milligram oxycodone tablets per trip to an informant.

Nichols faces up to 20 years in prison and a \$1 million fine when he is sentenced on October 6, 2011.

This case was also prosecuted as part of an ongoing effort led by the United States Attorney's Office for the Southern District of West Virginia to combat the illicit sale and misuse of prescription drugs. The U.S. Attorney's Office, joined by various federal, state and local law enforcement agencies, remain committed to aggressively pursuing and shutting down illegal pill trafficking, eliminating open air drug markets and curtailing the spread of opiate painkillers in communities across the Southern District.

This case was investigated by the Drug Enforcement Administration Task Force. Assistant United States Attorney Josh Hanks is in charge of the prosecution.

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